

3

Women and Economics

Highlights

- Between 1950 and 1990, the number of women in Iowa's labor force increased 159 percent, from 249,524 to 646,632. In 1999, 66.1 percent of women age 16 and older were in Iowa's workforce.
- In 1999, women represented an estimated 46.1 percent of the total workforce in Iowa.
- In 1989, the average of earnings for full-time male employees who worked year-round in Iowa was \$25,391. For women, the average of earnings was \$16,465.
- Almost half, 45.1 percent, of all female-headed households, no husband present with children under the age of 18 lived in poverty in 1989.
- In 1995, Iowa women comprised just 6.9 percent of members on boards of directors of Iowa's largest publicly owned corporations.
- Women primarily owned 57,527 small businesses in 1997, decreasing from the 1992 total of 71,040.

—Chapter 3—

Women and Economics

3.1 Introduction

Iowa women's economic status is tenuous. Despite some efforts, Iowa women and men are still clustered into jobs that are either predominately male or female. Some occupational classifications traditionally held by women are characterized by low pay, few benefits, and little, if any, chance for advancement. The result is that more women, many of whom are single parents, than men live in poverty.

3.2 Labor Force Participation

Between 1950 and 1990, the number of women in Iowa's labor force increased 159 percent while the number of men in the labor force dropped slightly by 1.6 percent. According to census data, 249,524 women were in the labor force in 1950, climbing to 646,632 in 1990. Males, on the other hand, dropped from 772,286 in 1950 to 759,871 in 1990. (SEE FIGURES 3.1 AND 3.2) In 1990, the percentage of Iowa women in the labor force

was 57.8 percent, up from 25.3 percent in 1950.¹ In 1999, 66.1 percent of women 16 years of age or older were in Iowa's labor force.²

In 1990, women represented nearly half, 46 percent, of the total workforce in Iowa, up from just one-quarter, 24.6 percent, in 1950.³ The 1999 Iowa Workforce Development estimate is 46.1 percent. (SEE FIGURE 3.3)

These changes can be attributed to a number of

Figure 3.1
FEMALES AND MALES IN LABOR
FORCE, IOWA, 1950-90

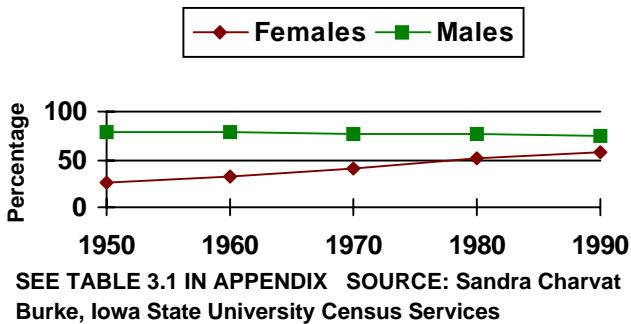


Figure 3.3
LABOR FORCE THAT IS FEMALE
IOWA, 1950-90

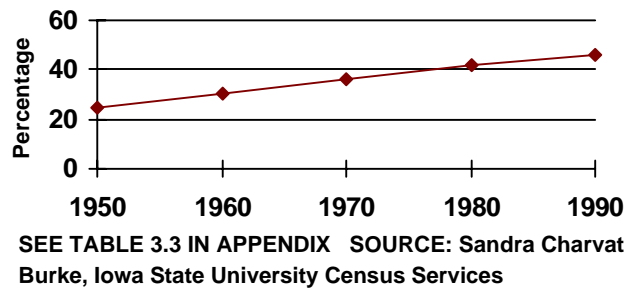
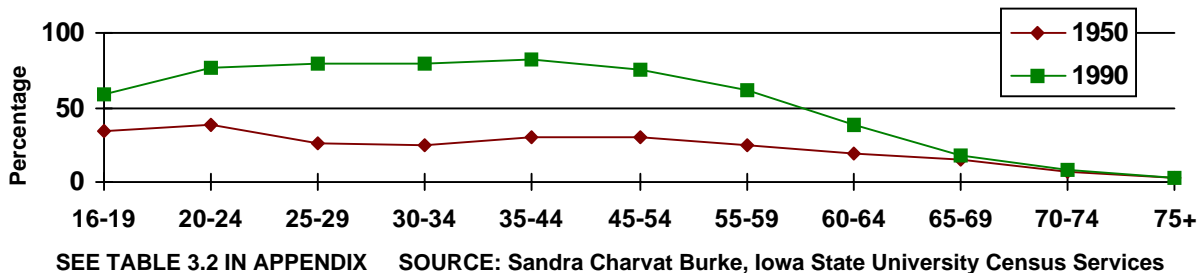


Figure 3.2
FEMALES IN LABOR FORCE BY AGE, IOWA, 1950 AND 1990



factors, including financial pressure to work outside the home to support families as well as increased educational and professional opportunities.

A growing number of women with children are in Iowa's workforce. From 1980 to 1990, the percentage of married women in the workforce with children under age 18 rose 20.5 percent. For single women with children, that number increased slightly, from 70.1 percent to 73 percent. (SEE FIGURES 3.4 AND 3.5)

Figure 3.4
MARRIED FEMALES IN LABOR FORCE
WITH CHILDREN, IOWA, 1980 AND 1990

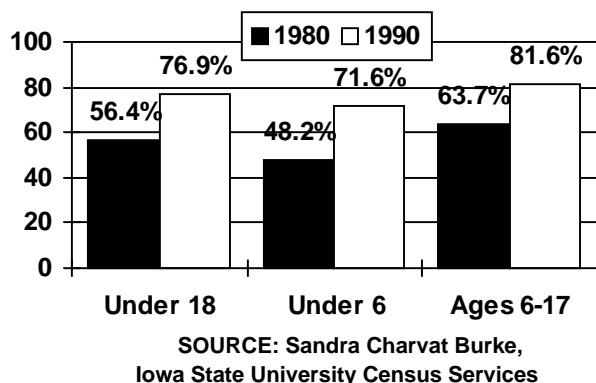
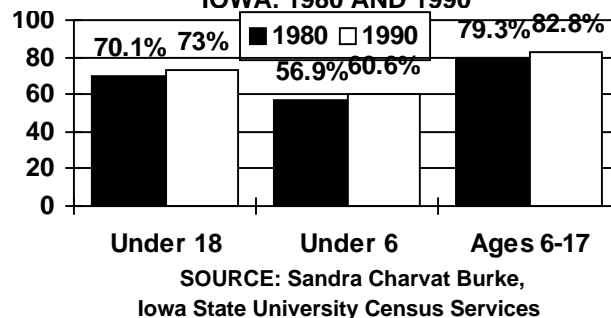


Figure 3.5
FEMALES IN LABOR FORCE,
NO HUSBAND PRESENT, WITH CHILDREN,
IOWA, 1980 AND 1990



3.3 Occupations and Income

In 1999, Iowa women made 73 cents for every \$1 a man made. Sixty-four percent of women made \$25,000 or less, while 67 percent of men made \$25,000 or more.⁴ The average of earnings for Iowa men who worked year-round, full-time was \$25,391 in 1989 compared to \$16,465 for full-time women workers. (SEE FIGURE 3.6) This wage disparity reflects the occupational choices of males and females, the wage differences between male- and female-dominated jobs, and the gender pay gap that exists in many of the same occupations.

Differences in pay scales among occupations that are dominated by one gender or the other contribute to pay

inequities. Out of 496 occupational categories in the 1990 census, 310 showed gender imbalance in Iowa. Men dominated 237, or 47.8 percent, of the jobs while women dominated 73, or 14.7 percent of the jobs.⁵

The 1990 census data also reveal that the largest percentage of Iowa's female wage-earning workers, 41.3 percent, were in technical, sales, and administrative support positions. Those are commonly referred to as "sticky floor" occupations because the pay tends to be low with limited potential for advancement. Comparatively, the largest percentage of male wage earners in the state, 22.8 percent, were operators, fabricators, or laborers, jobs that tend to pay higher wages. (SEE FIGURES 3.7-3.9)

Figure 3.6
AVERAGE EARNINGS BY GENDER, IOWA, 1979 AND 1989

Average Earnings:	Full-time Employees		Other than Full-time Employees	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
1979	\$17,297	\$9,846 (56.9%)	\$6,219	\$3,398 (54.6%)
1989	\$25,391	\$16,465 (64.8%)	\$9,726	\$5,918 (60.8%)
Full-time Employees	-\$15,000	\$15,000-\$24,999	\$25,000-\$34,999	\$35,000 or More
1979				
Male	39.1%	40.7%	12.4%	7.8%
Female	83.2%	14.6%	1.5%	0.7%
1989				
Male	17.8%	31.1%	24.2%	27.0%
Female	42.4%	37.7%	14.0%	5.9%

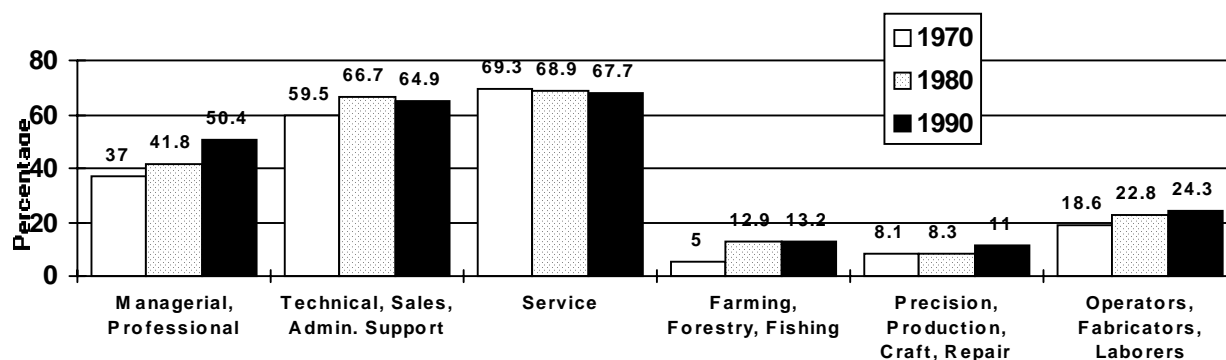
SOURCE: Willis Goudy and Sandra Charvat Burke, Iowa State University Census Services

Figure 3.7
OCCUPATIONS OF FEMALES AND MALES, IOWA, 1990



SOURCE: Sandra Charvat Burke, Iowa State University Census Services

Figure 3.8
OCCUPATIONS HELD BY FEMALES, IOWA, 1970-90



SOURCE: Sandra Charvat Burke, Iowa State University Census Services

Figure 3.9
CONCENTRATION OF WORKERS IN JOBS, IOWA, 1999*

OCCUPATION	%MALE	AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE	OCCUPATION	%FEMALE	AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE
1) Automobile Mechanic	98.9%	\$12.57	1) Child Care Provider	99.5%	\$ 6.52
2) Carpenter	98.6%	\$13.88	2) Secretary	98.9%	\$10.16
3) Electrician	97.9%	\$17.61	3) Registered Nurse	96.5%	\$16.04
4) Construction Laborer	97.4%	\$11.21	4) Receptionist	95.7%	\$ 8.33
5) Mechanic/Repairer	96.5%	\$13.61	5) Hairdresser/ Cosmetologist	95.7%	\$ 8.67
6) Machinist	95.3%	\$13.14	6) Typist	95.7%	\$10.35
7) Truck Driver	94.1%	\$15.58	7) Bank Teller	94.0%	\$ 7.91
8) Welder/Cutter	93.7%	\$12.61	8) Bookkeeper/Accounting Clerk	91.5%	\$10.17
9) Farm Manager	91.5%	\$21.65	9) Data Entry Keyer	90.9%	\$ 8.75
10) Material Handler	89.9%	\$ 9.96	10) Nursing Aide/Orderly	89.8%	\$ 7.94

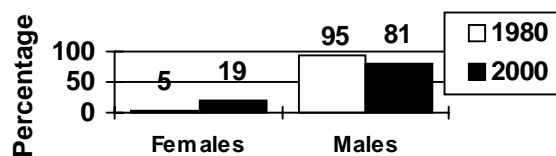
**Ten jobs held primarily by women pay a weighted average of \$10.45 an hour, compared to \$14.58 paid by ten jobs held primarily by men—a difference of \$4.13 per hour, or \$165.80 per week.*

SOURCE: Labor Market Information Bureau, Iowa Workforce Development

Males in Iowa also outnumber females in many of the professions, but that is changing, particularly for lawyers and doctors. According to the Iowa Bar Association, although they do not have the exact figures of women lawyers in the state (the latest estimate being 1/5 of all lawyers), women graduating from law school in the nation and in Iowa today nearly equals that of men. The same is true for physicians. Although females in 2000 comprised only 19 percent of the state's physicians, they are 42 percent of statewide family practice residents, and 41 percent of medical students and new residents in all specialties at the University of Iowa.⁶ (SEE FIGURE 3.10) These occupations tend to pay more than the traditionally female dominated jobs.

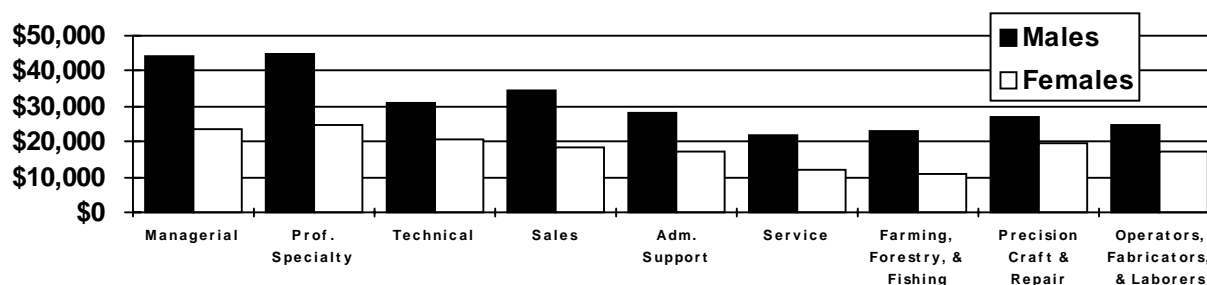
Yet, even within the same occupational categories, (professional, skilled, etc.,) Iowa women were shown in 1990 to have made less than men. (SEE FIGURE 3.11)

Figure 3.10
PHYSICIAN POPULATION, BY GENDER
IOWA, 1980 AND 2000



SOURCE: College of Medicine, The University of Iowa
SEE TABLE 3.4 IN APPENDIX

Figure 3.11
AVERAGE INCOME BY OCCUPATION AND GENDER, IOWA, 1990



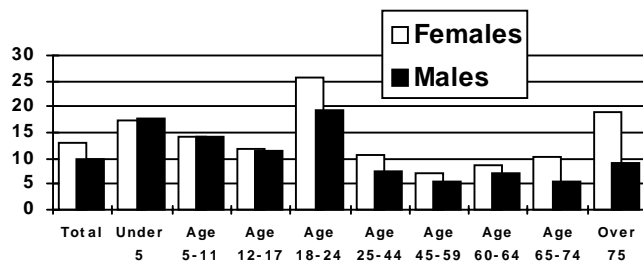
SEE TABLE 3.5 IN APPENDIX

SOURCE: U.S.Census Bureau

3.4 Poverty

Low wages in female-dominated occupations, and many women in low-paying jobs, contribute to the fact that so many women and their families live in poverty. Of all of Iowa's adults living in poverty in 1990, 61.9 percent were women.⁷ At almost every age, more females than males were living in poverty. (SEE FIGURE 3.12)

Figure 3.12
POVERTY BY AGE AND GENDER
IOWA, 1989



SEE TABLE 3.6 IN APPENDIX SOURCE: Sandra Charvat
Burke, Iowa State University Census Services

Throughout the 1980s, the number of displaced homemakers and single mothers in Iowa dramatically rose and their income status became even more tenuous.⁸

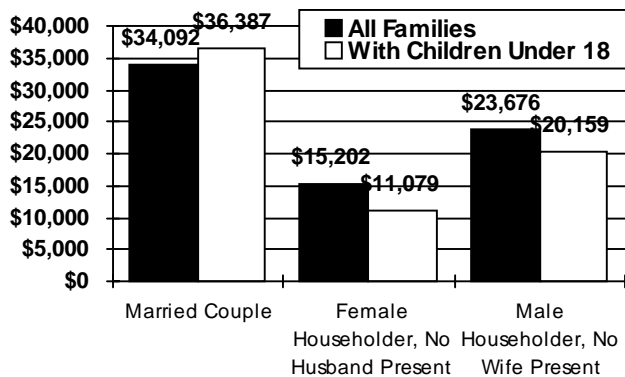
Displaced homemakers are those who have worked principally in the home providing unpaid household services for family members, who are unemployed or underemployed, who have had or would apparently have difficulty finding appropriate paid employment, who are or who have been dependent on the income of another family member but who are no longer supported by that income, and who have been dependent upon government assistance, or who are supported as the parent of a minor. Women dominate these numbers.

Census data show that in 1990 there were 196,854 displaced homemakers in Iowa, an increase of 20 percent from the 1980 census.⁹ Furthermore, 45.1 percent of female-headed households, no husband present, with children under age eighteen lived in poverty in 1990. Since children living in single-parent families are more likely to live with their mothers, they are more likely to live in poverty. (SEE FIGURES 3.13 AND 3.14)

The vast majority of households receiving cash assistance under the state-federal program called Family Investment Program (FIP) in Iowa are headed by single females -- 83 percent of adult FIP recipients are women. About 14.7 percent of the households on FIP are two-parent families. (In June, 2001 there were 18,527 regular FIP cases.)¹⁰

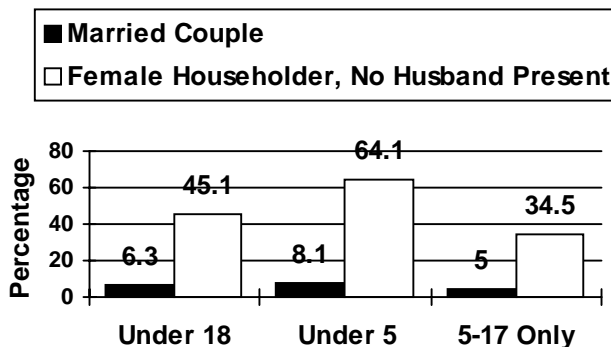
Women recipients of state assistance outnumber men recipients almost 2 to 1 (106,060 women to 56,276 men). In fiscal year 2000, women received the majority of assistance in programs such as FIP, Medicaid, Iowa Promise Jobs, food stamps, transitional child care, and child care block grant monies.¹¹

Figure 3.13
MEDIAN INCOME BY FAMILY TYPE
IOWA, 1989



SOURCE: Sandra Charvat Burke,
Iowa State University Census Services

Figure 3.14
POVERTY BY AGE OF CHILDREN
IOWA, 1989



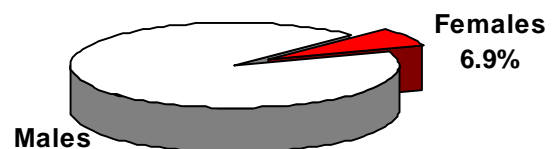
SOURCE: Sandra Charvat Burke,
Iowa State University Census Services

3.5 Corporate Boards

Often times, Iowa women who are able to get their shoes "unstuck" from the "sticky floor" find themselves bumping their heads on the "glass ceiling." Evidence of that is shown in the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women and Iowa Department of Economic Development's 1995 study on women who hold board seats in Iowa's largest publicly owned corporations in the state.

Of the 289 directors' seats in the study, only 20 were filled by women. (SEE FIGURE 3.15) All of those were white women. Furthermore, a double standard existed in the amount of education held by male and female board members. The largest percentage of women on boards of Iowa's largest publicly-owned companies had their master's degree while the largest percentage of men had their undergraduate degree.¹²

Figure 3.15
COMPOSITION OF IOWA'S CORPORATE
BOARDS OF DIRECTORS, IOWA, 1995*

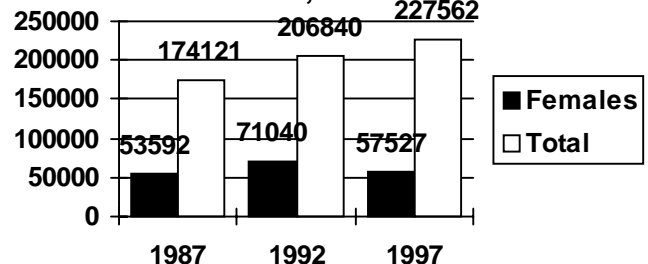


*Results from a survey of Iowa's largest publicly owned corporations by the ICSW and the IDED

3.6 Business Owners

The number of women leading their own businesses in Iowa has increased from 1987 to 1997, from 53,592 to 57,527. In 1992, over 71,000 women were the primary owners of their business. (SEE FIGURE 3.16)

Figure 3.16
FEMALE SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS,
IOWA, 1987 - 1997



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

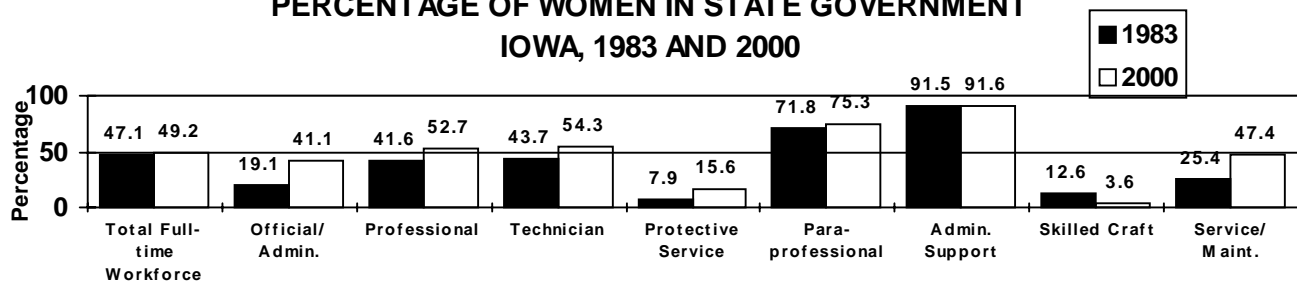
3.7 State Government

In 1982, the Governor's Affirmative Action Task Force was created to review the progress of affirmative action in the state and to make recommendations for change.

Greater emphasis on affirmative action since then has resulted in gains for Iowa women in employment in state government. For example, the percentage of women in official/administrative positions in the government climbed from 19.1 percent in 1983 to 41.1 percent in 2000. The percentage of women in professional positions went from 41.6 percent to 52.7 percent. (SEE FIGURE 3.17)

In May 2001, State department head positions that were filled by women included the Civil Rights Commission, Cultural Affairs, Economic Development, Elder Affairs, Human Services, Human Rights, Management, Personnel, and Public Safety. While the State of Iowa is improving its hiring of women for previously male-dominated occupations, it is having a tougher time attracting males to its female-dominated occupations such as administrative support and paraprofessional positions. From 1983 to 2000, the percentage of women in paraprofessional positions remained high--71.8 percent to 75.3 percent. During those 17 years, administrative support remained a female domain at 91.5 percent in 1983 and 91.6 percent in 2000, respectively. (SEE FIGURE 3.17)

Figure 3.17
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN STATE GOVERNMENT
IOWA, 1983 AND 2000



SOURCE: Iowa Department of Personnel

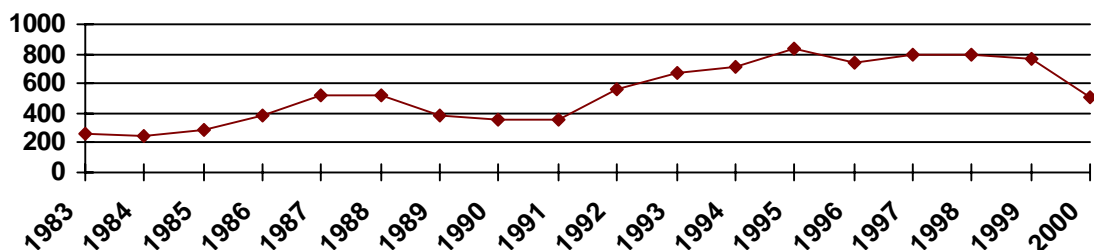
3.8 Sexual Discrimination

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Iowa Civil Rights Act of 1965 are the principal laws that protect workers from discrimination in employment. The acts make it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of sex as well as other protected characteristics. The Iowa Civil Rights Commission (ICRC) is the state's antidiscrimination agency that serves as a contact point for citizens who believe that they have been discriminated against in the areas of employment, housing, credit, public accommodations, and education.

Eighty-three and one-half percent of the discrimination complaints received by the ICRC are employment related.¹³ In 2000, there were 509 sex discrimination complaints made to the ICRC, the lowest since 1991. In 1999, there were 769 complaints.¹⁴ (SEE FIGURE 3.18)

From 1983 to 2000, complaints were most often made in the area of sex discrimination with exceptions in 1983, 1991, 1994, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2000, when it was the second most common complaint.

Figure 3.18
COMPLAINTS FILED ON SEX DISCRIMINATION TO THE
IOWA CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION, 1983-2000



SEE TABLE 3.7 IN APPENDIX

SOURCE: Iowa Civil Rights Commission

3.9 Forward-looking Strategies

■ Equal pay for work of equal value is one solution to gender-based income differences. Enactment of the Fair Pay Act by Congress would seek to eliminate wage discrimination based upon sex, race, or national origin. The legislation would require employers to provide equal pay for work of equivalent value. Such work would be defined as work that may be similar, but whose requirements are equivalent, when viewed as a composite of skills, effort, responsibility, and working conditions.

■ Iowa should develop a plan to achieve pay equity for employees in private industry, thereby eliminating wage discrimination on the basis of gender.

■ Females should be actively sought as members on corporate boards of directors. Appointing females on boards of directors brings new perspectives to board decisions. Furthermore, authorities who recruit female board members show shareholders and employees their commitment to diversity and equality.

■ Measures must be designed to guarantee affordable, accessible, quality child care, in particular for women seeking training and/or employment; income guidelines to qualify for child care reimbursement should be adjusted above the current 140 percent of the poverty level; and funding should be increased for child care subsidy programs for low-income Iowans.

■ As the number of displaced homemakers in the state of Iowa continues to rise, so arises the

need for increased funding for Iowans in Transition (displaced homemaker, single parents, or female offenders) program grants through the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women.

■ Iowa must continue its efforts in training and placing women in nontraditional occupations through state-operated employment and training programs.

■ Women entrepreneurs often face barriers that are not usually encountered by men: lack of socialization to entrepreneurship; exclusion from traditional male-dominated business networks; lack of money; and gender stereotypes. The State should continue to offer loans and programs to assist women who wish to start their own businesses, including the Targeted Small Business Program.

■ The Family Investment Program (FIP) should be modified to allow continued financial assistance until the recipient earns a living wage plus medical care, to allow some participants to be full-time mothers, and to recognize the need for a parent to stay home to care for a sick child.

■ A need exists to study the impact on women of contingency jobs, such as temporary, part-time, and contractual work, usually with no benefits and little job security.

■ Advocacy for the elimination of sexual harassment and sexual discrimination in the workforce must be continued.

¹ Sandra Charvat Burke, Iowa State University Census Services.

² Labor Market Information Bureau, Iowa Workforce Development.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Iowa Workforce Development, *Iowa Gender Wage Study*, 1999.

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau statistics as compiled by Beth Henning, State of Iowa Library.

⁶ College of Medicine, The University of Iowa.

⁷ Sandra Charvat Burke, Iowa State University Census Services.

⁸ Women Work! The National Network for Women's Employment, *Women Work, Poverty Persists: A Status Report*

on Displaced Homemakers and Single Mothers in the United States, 1994.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Iowa Department of Human Services.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Iowa Commission on the Status of Women within the Iowa Department of Human Rights, and the Iowa Department of Economic Development.

¹³ Iowa Civil Rights Commission.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Chapter 3: Women and Economics

Table 3.1

PERCENTAGE OF FEMALES AND MALES IN
LABOR FORCE, IOWA, 1950-90

<u>Year</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>
1950	25.3	79.7
1960	31.9	78.1
1970	40.0	77.2
1980	50.1	76.3
1990	57.8	75.0

Table 3.2

PERCENTAGE OF FEMALES IN LABOR FORCE
BY AGE, IOWA, 1950 AND 1990

<u>Age</u>	<u>Females in 1950</u>	<u>Females in 1990</u>
16-19	34.3	59.3
20-24	38.6	77.1
25-29	25.5	79.2
30-34	24.6	79.2
35-44	30.2	82.1
45-54	29.8	75.8
55-59	24.0	61.6
60-64	19.5	38.4
65-69	14.4	17.5
70-74	7.2	8.9
75+	2.8	2.6

Table 3.3

PERCENTAGE OF LABOR FORCE THAT
IS FEMALE, IOWA, 1950-90

<u>Year</u>	<u>Females</u>
1950	24.6
1960	30.2
1970	36.5
1980	41.8
1990	46.0

Table 3.4

PHYSICIAN POPULATION BY GENDER, IOWA
1980 AND 2000

	<u>1980</u>	<u>2000</u>
<u>Males</u>	3,111	3,874
<u>Females</u>	175	881

Table 3.5

AVERAGE INCOME BY OCCUPATION AND
GENDER, IOWA, 1990

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>
Managerial	\$23,600	\$44,100
Professional Specialty	\$25,000	\$45,000
Technical	\$20,800	\$30,800
Sales	\$18,300	\$34,200
Admin. Support	\$17,100	\$27,900
Service	\$12,000	\$23,200
Farming, Forestry, & Fishing	\$11,100	\$21,600
Precision Craft, & Repair	\$19,400	\$27,000
Operators, Fabricators, & Laborers	\$17,100	\$24,900

Table 3.6

PERCENTAGE IN POVERTY BY AGE AND GENDER,
IOWA, 1989

<u>Age</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>
Total	12.9	10.0
Under 5	17.2	17.8
5-11	14.4	14.2
12-17	12.0	11.4
18-24	25.8	19.4
25-44	10.7	7.4
45-59	7.0	5.4
60-64	8.8	7.1
65-74	10.2	5.4
75+	19.0	8.9

Table 3.7

COMPLAINTS FILED ON SEX DISCRIMINATION TO
THE IOWA CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION, 1983-2000

<u>Year</u>	<u>Complaints</u>
1983	254
1984	251
1985	287
1986	384
1987	514
1988	521
1989	378
1990	351
1991	359
1992	566
1993	678
1994	709
1995	830*
1996	745
1997	796
1998	792
1999	769
2000	509

*The 1995 figure is based on an estimate